(b) what is the limit for a Minister to spend for reducing its office;

(c) whether the amount spent by the predecessors in also taken into consideration; and

(d) how much money has been spent so far on the Prime Minister's Office, Prime Minister's residence and for security and other arrangements and for the Ministries of Civil Aviation, Tourism and Law, each separately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) It has not yet been brought to the notice of Government.

(b) and (c) A ceiling of Rs. 45,000/- has been prescribed for providing furniture furnishing etc., in the office and office portion of the residence of a Minister. It has been further clarified that an expenditure not exceeding Rs. 45,000/- may be incurred for furnishing the office and office portion of the residence of a Minister only once initially and no additional expenditure should be incurred there after during the period of 5 years even if a Minister changes portfolios.

(d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the house.

Blending of edibl oils

1780. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given permission to NDDB for blending of edible oils in view of the rapid increase in prices of groundnut oil;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether the cheaper blended oil would be supplied in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Department of Health has not yet amended the Rules under the Prevention of Food Adulteration. Act to permit blending of groundnut oil with palmolein and groundnut oil with mustard oil as proposed by NDDB. Grant of permission for such blends will help increase the availability and check rice in prices of groundnut oil which is the most highly preferred oil of Indian consumers.

(c) NDDB's programme for marketing of such blends is contingent on approval of its proposal by Government.

Construction of first Railway line in North East

1781. SHRI KHYOMO LOTHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) when was the first Railway line constructed in the North-East;

(b) when was the broad-gauge line extended upto Guwahati;

(c) whether some of the North-East States have demanded for the extension of broad-gauge lines beyond Guwahati-Dimapur-Tinsukia;

(d) whether the conversion of the existing metregauge N.E.F. railway lines from Guwahati-Tinsukia would be taken up during the Eighth Five Year Plan period; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) In 1882 from Dibrugarh Town to Dinjan Stream (17.7 Km).

(b) In 1984

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) Due to constraint of resources and heavy commitments already in hand, there is no proposal for conversion of the Guwahati-Tinsukia metre-gauge section into broad-gauge at present. The Eighth Plan has not been finalised, so far.